

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 ERDE-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00

H-02 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01

PM-04 PRS-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

TRSE-00 NSC-05 /092 W

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P R 291511Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2199

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

CINC EUR VAHINGEN

USNMR SHAPE

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 16458

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MBFR GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: SCHMIDT DISCUSSES DISARMAMENT INITIATIVE

REF: BONN 16016 DTG 221708Z SEP 76 (NOTAL)

1. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL TAKE AN INITIATIVE IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT TO GET THE MBFR TALKS MOVING AGAIN SHOULD HE REMAIN CHANCELLOR FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER 3 BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS. SCHMIDT SAID THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE GOTTEN STUCK IN THE "JUNGLE OF EXPERTS' ARGUMENTS" AND THAT THEY MUST BE RAISED TO A POLITICAL LEVEL.

2. ACCORDING TO A RADIO INTERVIEW AND PRESS REPORTS, THE CHANCELLOR PLANS TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH BOTH
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BREZHNEV AND THE NEWLY-ELECTED PRESIDENT. IT WAS

REPORTED THAT SCHMIDT BELIEVED IT NECESSARY TO WAIT UNTIL THE NEW AMERICAN PRESIDENT WAS IN OFFICE AND A SALT II AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED, WHICH SCHMIDT HOPED WOULD BE BY THE SPRING OF 1977.

3. ON A SIMILAR NOTE, SPD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER HERBERT WEHNER PREPARED A SHORT CONTRIBUTION FOR THE SEPTEMBER 23 EDITION OF THE "AUGSBURGER ALLGEMEINE" IN WHICH HE ARGUED THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF DISARMAMENT MATTERS FOR THE FRG. WEHNER WROTE THAT IN COMING YEARS EXISTING TREATIES MUST BE FURTHER EXPANDED AND THAT IT WAS OF URGENT NECESSITY TO PLACE THE THEME OF ARMS LIMITATIONS AND TROOP REDUCTIONS AT THE CENTER POINT OF GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY. ONLY IN THIS WAY, WEHNER CONTINUED, COULD PEACE BE STABILIZED INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY AND THE DETENTE PROCESS MADE IRREVERSIBLE.

4. DISARMAMENT COMMISSIONER ROTH, IN COMMENTING ON THE CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS ON SEPTEMBER 28, INDICATED THAT THE CENTRAL FEATURE OF THE CHANCELLOR'S PROSPECTIVE INITIATIVE WOULD BE ESSENTIALLY THE FIRM GERMAN POSITION THAT THE GOAL OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS MUST REMAIN PARITY IN THE FORM OF A COMMON COLLECTIVE CEILING. ROTH SAID THE WORD "COLLECTIVE" SHOULD BE UNDERLINED SEVERAL TIMES, SINCE THE GERMANS FULLY INTEND TO WRAP THEMSELVES IN THE PROTECTIVE COLORATION OF THE ALLIANCE. ROTH ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE CHANCELLOR HAD SAID HE WOULD BE TAKING SUCH INITIATIVES IN THE COMING "YEARS." ROTH CONTINUED THAT THE CHANCELLOR COULD OBVIOUSLY NOT UNDERTAKE HIS INITIATIVE UNTIL THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES HAD BEEN SORTED OUT. ROTH ALSO SAID THAT ANY SUCH INITIATIVE ON MBFR WOULD ALSO INCLUDE THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER.

5. A CHANCELLERY OFFICIAL ALSO INDICATED TO US ON

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SEPTEMBER 28 THAT A FUTURE SCHMIDT INITIATIVE WOULD NOT REPRESENT ANY DEPARTURE FROM THE ALLIANCE POSITION. ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT SPOKEN TO THE CHANCELLOR RECENTLY ABOUT MBFR, THE OFFICIAL SAID IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THAT THE CHANCELLOR REALLY HAD NOTHING NEW IN MIND AND THAT THE GERMANS DID NOT INTEND TO STAKE OUT A POSITION INDEPENDENT OF THE ALLIES, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE SOVIET UNION'S GOAL OF PRESSING FOR BUNDESWEHR REDUCTIONS WHICH DID NOT PLEASE THE CHANCELLOR. EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE OFFICIAL CONTINUED, THE CHANCELLOR WAS RATHER IMPATIENT WITH THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN THE TALKS, BUT FELT THAT THE TIME WAS NOT RIPE FOR A NEW INITIATIVE. NOW, DURING THE FINAL PHASE OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN, SCHMIDT WAS INCREASING HIS POLITICAL PROFILE
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ON MBFR TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE ELECTORATE WHAT HE AS CHANCELLOR WOULD DO IF THE COALITION WERE RETURNED TO POWER.

6. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE CHANCELLOR'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT THE NEED FOR A GERMAN INITIATIVE ON MBFR SHOULD BE VIEWED MORE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL CAMPAIGN THAN AS HAVING ANY IMMEDIATE OPERATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE CHANCELLOR DESIRES TO MOVE THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD SHOULD

HE REMAIN IN OFFICE. THIS IS BECAUSE SCHMIDT CONSIDERS HIMSELF ONE OF THE FATHERS OF MBFR AND ALSO BECAUSE IT WOULD ADD A NEW DIMENSION TO THE FRG'S OSTPOLITIK WERE AN AGREEMENT TO BE ACHIEVED.

7. WHILE TRYING TO ESTABLISH THE REQUISITE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK FOR MOVEMENT IN MBFR THROUGH CLOSE ALLIED CONSULTATIONS PLUS A HIGH LEVEL APPROACH TO THE SOVIETS, IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE FRG WILL HEW STRICTLY TO THE CURRENT ALLIANCE POSITION WHICH SAFEGUARDS GERMAN INTERESTS TO A LARGE EXTENT. THE GERMANS ARE WELL AWARE OF THE DANGERS WHICH AWAIT THEM VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS SHOULD THEY STRAY FROM THE ALLIANCE POSITION.
HILLENBRAND

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